



THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA SYSTEM

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January 1, 2021

Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee
Legislative Office Building
333 W. Salisbury Street
Raleigh, NC 27601

Dear Members of the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee,

As required by G.S. 116-209.62(j), and in coordination with the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority and the Teaching Fellows partner institutions, I submit the attached Annual Report for the North Carolina Teaching Fellows Program on behalf of the North Carolina Teaching Fellows Commission.

Per statute, this report includes data on the following reporting requirements:

- Demographic information regarding award recipients;
- Number of recipients by institution of higher education and program;
- Number of recipients by anticipated STEM and special education licensure area;
- Information regarding program graduates; and
- Information regarding the partnership between Teaching Fellows and the New Teacher Support Program.

The requirements of 116-209.62(j)(2)(d) and (e), and 116-209.62(j)(3) cannot yet be included in this annual report, as the program is not yet able to assess the performance of program graduates or provide information on long-term outcomes.

The North Carolina Teaching Fellows Program is governed by the North Carolina Teaching Fellows Commission and currently partners with five educator preparation programs: Elon University, Meredith College, North Carolina State University, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Thanks to the adoption of HB 1096 (SL 2020-56), the NC Teaching Fellows Commission is now authorized to select three additional partner institutions to participate in the program – a process that will unfold later this year.

Teaching Fellows is a key initiative for fostering success for North Carolina students by supplying high-quality teachers in the most critical areas of need. As the UNC System continues its work to strengthen the educational and economic futures of our state, Teaching Fellows remains a key priority to increase opportunity and foster success for North Carolina students.

Sincerely,

Peter Hans
UNC System President



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**UNIVERSITY OF
NORTH CAROLINA
SYSTEM**

NORTH CAROLINA TEACHING FELLOWS PROGRAM: ANNUAL REPORT

January 1, 2021

University of North Carolina System
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

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Background

The North Carolina Teaching Fellows Program was reestablished by the North Carolina General Assembly in the 2017 State Budget (S.L 2017-57) with the purpose to “recruit, prepare, and support students residing in or attending institutions of higher education located in North Carolina for preparation as highly effective STEM or special education teachers in the State’s public schools.”

The legislation also established the North Carolina Teaching Fellows Commission (Commission), a 14-member body tasked with providing program oversight. In accordance with the parameters set by the General Assembly, the Commission was tasked with the responsibility of selecting five educator preparation programs to partner with the program.

Per G.S. 116-209.62(f), the Commission was directed to evaluate educator preparation programs and use the designated legislative criteria to create an application process to select five educator preparation programs as partners for the program. After careful evaluation, the following institutions were selected: Elon University, Meredith College, NC State University, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

During the 2020 Legislative Session, HB 1096 (Session Law 2020-56) was adopted, which authorizes the North Carolina Teaching Fellows Commission to select an additional three institutions to become Teaching Fellows partner institutions – a process that will unfold later this year.

Program Overview

For 2017-2018, the first year of the program’s reauthorization, the Teaching Fellows application opened on December 4, 2017, with an application deadline of January 15, 2018. For the 2017-2018 cycle, a total of 232 applications were received. After an initial review, applicants progressed to finalist interviews, which were held in six locations around the state over two weeks (virtual interviews were also provided). On April 1, 2018, the NC Teaching Fellows Commission offered awards to 110 applicants, and 74 moved forward to be formally named as a North Carolina Teaching Fellow.

For the 2018-2019 application cycle, a total of 220 applications were submitted. After initial review, finalist interviews were again held across the state. After a comprehensive evaluation of finalist’s application and interview scores, the Teaching Fellows Commission decided to offer 133 awards. Currently, there are 107 North Carolina Teaching Fellows as part the 2018-2019 cohort (does not include program graduates).

For the 2019-2020 application cycle, a total of 189 applications were submitted. After initial review, finalist interviews were again held across the state. After a comprehensive evaluation of finalist’s application and interview scores, the Teaching Fellows Commission chose to offer 114 awards. Currently, there are 92 North Carolina Teaching Fellows as part of the 2019-2020 cohort.

Program Enrichment

A key element of the Teaching Fellows program is providing meaningful enrichment opportunities to all program participants. The enrichment model for Teaching Fellows is two-fold – under the direction of a campus director, each of the five partner institutions have designed an enrichment framework, which is designed to build community in a smaller setting among a Fellow’s peers who attend the same

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institution. The campus-level enrichment opportunities are intentionally designed to be unique, allowing each institution to align to their respective program's particular areas of focus and to build organic partnerships within their own respective communities.

An additional layer of support is provided by state-level enrichment opportunities, which bring together the collective group of Fellows from all five partner institutions. These events are designed to build a strong sense of community among all Fellows and to highlight particular topics to ensure a strong and cohesive vision for the broader mission and purpose for the Teaching Fellows program. The first enrichment event was held for the 2017-2018 class of Teaching Fellows on April 5-6, 2019 at the North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching in Cullowhee, North Carolina. Fellows gathered for a two-day seminar that focused on teacher leadership, professionalism, and building strong classroom culture.

The second enrichment event, which included the 2017-2018 and the 2018-2019 class of Fellows, was held on September 14-15, 2019 at the Rizzo Conference Center in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. The event agenda provided opportunities for teambuilding activities, a Q&A panel with beginning teachers and their mentors from the New Teacher Support Program, an in-depth workshop on cultural bias and social emotional learning, and a session that featured the 2018 and 2019 North Carolina Teachers of the Year.

An enrichment event planned for fall 2020 was postponed due to COVID-19 concerns. While an in-person enrichment event is tentatively planned for fall 2021, the event may be shifted to a virtual format due to continued uncertainty.

Reporting Requirements

This report has been prepared in accordance with the reporting criteria specified by G.S. 116-209.62(j). However, due to COVID's impact on testing, observations, and data reporting for 2020-2021 school year, program graduates do not yet have sufficient data to be evaluated as prescribed in 116-209.62(j)(2)(d) and (e), and 116-209.62(j)(3); these metrics are thus excluded from this report.

- 1) Forgivable Loans awarded from the Trust Fund, including the following:
 - a. Demographic information regarding recipients.
 - b. Number of recipients by institution of higher education and program.
 - c. Information on number of recipients by anticipated STEM and special education licensure area.
- 2) Placement and repayment rates, including the following:
 - a. Number of graduates who have been employed in a STEM or special education licensure area within two years of program completion.
 - b. Number of graduates who accepted employment at a low-performing school identified under G.S. 115C-105.37 as part of their years of service.
 - c. Number of graduates who have elected to do loan repayment and their years of service, if any, prior to beginning loan repayment.
 - d. Number of graduates employed in a STEM or special education licensure area who have received an overall rating of at least accomplished and have met expected growth on applicable standards of the teacher evaluation instrument.
 - e. Aggregate information on student growth and proficiency in courses taught by graduates who have fulfilled service requirements through employment in a STEM or special education licensure area.

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- 2a) Mentoring and coaching support through the North Carolina New Teacher Support Program, including the following:
- a. Number of forgivable recipients who received mentoring and coaching support when employed at a low-performing school identified under G.S. 115C-105.37.
 - b. Number of forgivable loans recipients who received mentoring and coaching support when employed at a school not identified as low-performing under G.S. 115C-105.37.
- 3) Selected school outcomes by program, including the following:
- a. Turnover rate for forgivable loan graduates, including the turnover rate for graduates who also received mentoring and coaching support through the North Carolina New Teacher Support Program.
 - b. Aggregate information on student growth and proficiency as provided annually by the State Board of Education to the Commission in courses taught by forgivable loan graduates.
 - c. Fulfillment rate of forgivable loan graduates.

Data Reporting

*The data below reflects the cumulative totals of the 2017-2018, 2018-2019, and 2019-2020 classes of North Carolina Teaching Fellows (excluding program graduates).
Please note that percentages have been rounded.*

Demographic Information

The Teaching Fellows’ demographic data largely mirrors the metrics of the existing teacher workforce in North Carolina, particularly in terms of race and gender. Numerous studies have established a clear correlation between a diverse teacher workforce and positive outcomes for student achievement – a finding that underscores both the importance and the urgency of increasing the diversity of the teacher pipeline in North Carolina.¹ At current capacity, the Teaching Fellows program makes up a fraction of the larger teacher pipeline, but even so, remains committed to the larger statewide efforts to substantively increase teacher diversity.

In authorizing the expansion to three additional educator preparation programs, the General Assembly has directed the NC Teaching Fellows Commission to make a “diverse selection” and the Commission is committed to evaluating applying institutions on multiple measures relating to diversity. Aside from the potential of allowing the program to have a broader reach in recruiting minority applicants (both in terms of gender and race), another goal is to increase the applicant pool from rural areas.

Table 1: Teaching Fellows by Gender

	2017-2018 Cohort 1	2018-2019 Cohort 2	2019-2020 Cohort 3	Total Recipients
Male	13	13	18	44
Female	61	94	74	229
TOTAL	74	107	92	273

¹ 1 Redding, C. (2019). A Teacher Like Me: A Review of the Effect of Student–Teacher Racial/Ethnic Matching on Teacher Perceptions of Students and Student Academic and Behavioral Outcomes. *Review of Educational Research*, 89 (4), 499–535. See also Egalite, A. J., Kisida, B., & Winters, M. A. (2015). Representation in the classroom: The effect of own-race teachers on student achievement. *Economics of Education Review*, 45, 44-52.; Dee, T. S. (2005). A teacher like me: Does race, ethnicity, or gender matter? *The American Economic Review*, 95(2), 158-165.

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Table II: Teaching Fellows by Race

	2017-2018 Cohort 1	2018-2019 Cohort 2	2019-2020 Cohort 3	TOTAL
Black/African American	4	6	11	21
American Indian/Alaska Native	1	1	1	3
Asian/Pacific Islander	4	2	0	6
Hispanic/Latino	4	5	5	14
Multiracial/Other	0	3	4	7
White/Caucasian	61	90	71	222
TOTAL	74	107	92	273

Program & Licensure Area Information

Table III: Teaching Fellows by Institution

	2017-2018 Cohort 1	2018-2019 Cohort 2	2019-2020 Cohort 3	TOTAL
Elon University	8	7	2	17
Meredith College	7	7	0	14
North Carolina State University	25	52	51	128
UNC Chapel Hill	15	13	16	44
UNC Charlotte	19	28	25	72
TOTAL	74	107	92	273

Table IV: Teaching Fellows by Intended Licensure Area

	2017-2018 Cohort 1	2018-2019 Cohort 2	2019-2020 Cohort 3	TOTAL
STEM	53	74	58	185
Special Education	21	33	34	88
TOTAL	74	107	92	273

Table V: Summary of Program Graduates

When the program was reauthorized in 2017, one important change was the addition of other pathways of program entry outside of the traditional model of a four-year awards that were limited exclusively to high school seniors. As these pathways are still developing, the number of program graduates for the initial cohorts is small and will grow in the coming years. The first full four-year program cohort will graduate in spring 2022.

	Number
Total Number of Program Graduates	47
Number of Graduates Employed in STEM/SPED Licensure Area	18
Number of Graduates Employed in Low-Performing School	*
Number of Graduates Who Have Elected for Cash Repayment	27

*At this time, the data for the number of graduates employed in low-performing schools is not available pending verification of employment records. This data will be updated as soon as verification is available. Please note that two (2) Fellows are currently in deferment status.

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Table VI: Partnership with New Teacher Support Program

As of the date of this report's submission (January 1, 2021), NTSP continues to support a small number of program graduates, as outlined below. The updated data for the current 2020-2021 school year will be available this summer.

	Number
Number of Graduates Receiving Mentoring and Coaching Support who are employed at Low-Performing School	0
Number of Graduates Receiving Mentoring and Coaching Support who are employed at Non Low-Performing School	4

Next Steps

The program is now entering its fourth application cycle, which opened on October 1, 2020. The application deadline is midnight on Monday, January 11, 2021. After that time, all submitted applications will undergo an initial review, followed by another round of finalist interviews. Due to continued COVID concerns, all finalist interviews will be held virtually this year.

Per statute, the Teaching Fellows Commission will meet (virtually) and make final decisions on the number of awards to be offered by April 1, 2021. Finalists who are selected and offered an award will have until May 1, 2021 to sign the promissory note to formally accept the terms of the forgivable loan.

The next annual report from the North Carolina Teaching Fellows Program must be submitted by January 1, 2022.

